WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. In a carrier for movement of test sample devices through an automated sample testing instrument, said carrier having N receiving structures for receiving N test sample devices, where N is an integer greater than one, each receiving structure for receiving a test sample device, the improvement comprising:

providing N optical interrupt positioning features formed in said carrier, each of said positioning features placed in registry with one of said receiving structures, whereby detection of one of said positioning features by a fixed optical interrupt sensor in said sample testing instrument detects a position of a test sample device placed in the receiving structure corresponding to said positioning feature.

2. The improvement of claim 1, wherein said carrier is moved through said instrument in a direction having a longitudinal axis, said test sample devices are oriented in said carrier in a direction orthogonal to said longitudinal axis, and wherein said positioning features are arranged on said carrier in a direction parallel to the direction of movement of said carrier in said instrument.

3. The improvement of claim 2, wherein said carrier comprises an upper surface and a lower surface and first and second side regions, and wherein said positioning features comprise voids formed in a rib depending from said lower surface, said rib placed between said first and second side regions, wherein said fixed optical interrupt sensor is positioned in said instrument along the path of movement of said carrier wherein said rib passes over said optical interrupt sensor.

4. The improvement of claim 1, wherein said carrier further comprises a first portion having a handle and an opposite second portion having a flat panel, said panel for receiving a bar code associated with said carrier.

5. The improvement of claim 1, wherein said carrier further comprises N test tube receiving structures placed in registry with said N test device receiving structures.

6. The improvement of claim 1, wherein said carrier further comprises alphanumerical indicia for said receiving structures.

7. The improvement of claim 6, wherein said alphanumerical indicia comprise numerals provided on said carrier 1 . . . N in registry with said receiving structures.

8. The improvement of claim 1, wherein said test sample devices comprises multi-well test sample cards.

9. A carrier for holding test sample devices during movement of the test sample devices through an automated sample testing instrument, comprising:

a body having an upper portion and a lower portion and first and second side portions;

receiving structures in said upper portion for holding up to N test sample devices and up to N test tubes containing test samples;

a portion comprising a handle and an opposite portion having a flat panel for receiving a machine readable indicium; and

N optical interrupt positioning features, each of said positioning features placed in registry with one of said receiving structures, whereby detection of one of said positioning features by a fixed optical interrupt sensor in said sample testing instrument detects the position of the test sample device placed in the receiving structure corresponding to said positioning feature.

10. The carrier of claim 9, wherein said test sample devices comprise multi-well test sample cards.

11. The carrier of claim 9, wherein said carrier further comprises alphanumerical indicia for said receiving structures.

12. The carrier of claim 11, wherein said alphanumerical indicia comprise numerals provided on said carrier 1 . . . N in registry with said receiving structures.